(d) the details of major issues of NRIs pending for consideration, redressed by Government recently?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A Scheme for the issuance of a Persons of India Origin (PIO) Card for those living abroad and having foreign passports is under consideration. The PIO card would confer on its holder certain special benefits including a visa-free regime and several other facilities in the economic financial and educational fields.

(d) The details of some of the other facilities recently provided by Government to NRIs are as follows:—

1. The investment limit by a single Non-Resident Indian (NRI)/Person of Indian Origin (PIO)/Overseas Corporate Body (OCB) for the purchase of shares/debentures in a company through stock exchanges under the portfolio investment scheme has been raised to 5 per cent.

2. Aggregate limit for all NRI/PIO/OCB/investments has been increased to 10 per cent.

3. Investment by NRI/PIO/OCB in unlisted companies is also permitted now.

Investment in Health Sector

4. Government has removed the following two conditions applicable to investment in the health sector, namely:—

(i) the centres are equipped as per the norms specified by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; and

(ii) 25 per cent of the facilities available in hospitals/centres are provided free of cost to poor and the needy.

Investment under the 100 per cent Repatriation Scheme

5. No prior permission is now required for receiving inward remittances and issue of shares to NRIs/PIOs/OCBs by Indian companies.

Investment under 24 percent/40 per cent Scheme

6. Indian companies seeking NRI/OCB investment under this scheme do not any longer require approval from the RBI.

Insurgency in Assam

1952. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of demands made by present Assam State Government to the Central Government regarding tackling the problem of insurgency in Assam; and

(b) the stand of Government on each of these demands?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) The main demands made by the Government of Assam and the stand of Central Government thereon are as follows:

(i) Reimbursement if Security Related Expenditure

An amount of Rs. 131.91 crores has been reimbursed to the Government of Assam for period 1-4-1990 to 31-3-1995. The Central Government has also agreed to reimburse expenditure w.e.f. 1-4-1995 as per approved guidelines.

(ii) Additional Central Para-Military Forces

The deployment of Central Forces in States depends upon over all security scenario and the avail-

abiliiy of such forces. Accordingly, Cenral Forces, including the Army have been deployed in Assam keeping in view the overall availability of these forces. The security requirements of the State of Assam are reviewed constantly. Government of India are fully alive to the security situation in the State.

(lii) Modernisation of Police Force:

A special scheme for modernization of police forces of the North Eastern States has been prepared. Arms and ammunition and vehicles (including Bullet proof vehicles) worth Rs. 16.46 crore have been approved and released for Assam police during 1997-98. The State of Assam has also received the following assistance during the last three years under the ongoing scheme for modernisation of police force:

1995-96	Rs. 95.43 lakhs
1996-97	Rs. 195.43 lakhs
1997-98	Rs. 47.715 lakhs

(iv) Action against trans-Border Movement of Militants:

The matter has been taken up with the Governments of Bangladesh, Myanmar and Bhutan and they have assured full cooperation.

One-time huge grant by Assam for fighting insurgency

1953. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Assam Government have demanded a one-time huge grant from the Centre to fight the menace or rising insurgency in Assam:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of Assam had demanded one-time grant of Rs. 500 crores to overcome its ways and means difficulties.

(c) This demand of State Government has not been accepted. However, Government of India has sanctioned and released Rs. 131.91 crores to Government of Assam as security related expenditure for the years 1990—95. The Government has also agreed to reimburse security related expenditure incurred on counter insurgency operations by the State of Assam from 1.4.1995 and onwards.

Number of disciplines opened at RIMS, Imphal

1954. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of disciplines opened in post-graduate classes of the Regional Institute of Medical Science, Lamphelpat, Imphal, Manipur;

(b) the number of disciplines to be opened in post-graduate classes at this Institute; and

(c) by when it will be opened?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L. K. ADVANI): (a) Fifteen.

(b) Eight.

(c) MD Course in Pathology and Forensic medicine will be started next year. Courses in other disciplines would be started after obtaining necessary clearances from the Medical Council of India and after the requisite infrastructural and staff facilities are available.